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# Fourth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015)

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2233 (2015), in which I was requested to report every three months on progress made toward fulfilling the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The report covers key developments related to Iraq and provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since the issuance of my report dated 27 April 2016 (S/2016/396).

## II. Summary of key political developments pertaining to Iraq

### A. Political situation

2. Negotiations to overcome the political deadlock and split in the Council of Representatives persisted during the reporting period. At the same time, the Iraqi people continued their calls for tangible progress on Government reforms and the implementation of anti-corruption measures. Supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr, staged large protests in coordination with pro-reform and anti-corruption civil society protesters, mainly on Fridays. The dissenting members of Parliament coalesced into a new entity, named the Reform Front, which saw increased steps towards the consolidation of the group as a new political force. Reform Front members filed an appeal with the Federal Supreme Court, challenging the legality of the parliamentary session on 26 April.

3. On 20 May, thousands of protesters, including many supporters of al-Sadr, moved from Baghdad's Tahrir Square towards the Green Zone and forced their way into the Council of Ministers' secretariat building and the Office of the Prime Minister. Iraqi security forces used crowd control measures, including rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons inside and outside the Green Zone. Live ammunition was reportedly fired into the air in an effort to disperse the crowds. UNAMI received reports of the death of four protesters and of many other casualties, including some members of the security forces.

4. The incident on 20 May was the second major breach of the Green Zone's security since 30 April, after heightened security measures had been put in place. Muqtada al-Sadr strongly criticized the Government for using force against



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protesters. The same day, the Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, stated in a televised address that the breach of the Green Zone, like recent suicide attacks in the Baghdad area, was the work of "Baathist infiltrators" and "criminals" belonging to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), to undermine the Iraqi security forces. The statement was strongly rejected by the protesters and by al-Sadr.

5. On 21 May, in Baghdad, protesters supporting Muqtada al-Sadr and a protest group called the Civil Trend side formed a joint higher coordination committee to organize their activities. Al-Sadr, who had announced that he would be outside the country as of 30 April for religious seclusion, issued statements calling for the continuation of peaceful protests and for government reforms.

6. During the second week of June, several attacks occurred on the offices of major established Shi'a political parties in southern governorates and Baghdad, which were allegedly carried out by splinter elements of the protesters (many calling themselves "revolutionist youth"). Those elements forced the temporary closure of Da'wah, Badr, Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq and Fadila party offices, claiming that those parties were impediments to reforms. After coming under mounting criticism, on 10 June, al-Sadr called on his supporters to cease demonstrations during Ramadan, refrain from using violence and prepare for a "peaceful, popular million-man demonstration" at the end of Ramadan.

7. On 10 May, the Council of Representatives announced the resumption of its work at the committee level. The plenary, however, was deferred owing to the continued split within the Council and, in turn, the lack of a quorum. After over a month of extensive mediation efforts to bring back those sections of the Members of Parliament who had boycotted or suspended their participation for various reasons, the plenary of the Council reconvened on 29 May to express support for the Government's recent launch of an operation to retake Fallujah. Notably, the session included members of the Council of Representatives from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

8. In his address to the session, the Prime Minister stated that the differences between political blocs over the parliamentary impasse were minimal, that the Council of Representatives had an important oversight role to play and that nominations would be accepted for the leadership positions of independent commissions, ministerial undersecretaries and military leadership, as a next step. Subsequent efforts to hold a session of the Council with a full agenda failed and on 31 May, the Speaker of Parliament, Salim al-Juburi, announced that the legislative break for the Council would commence on 1 June. Since the swearing in of the new ministers of trade, oil and transport did not take place, those ministries are currently headed by acting ministers.

9. In May, and again in early June, the Federal Supreme Court indicated that it would rule on the legality of the contested 14 and 26 April sessions of the Council of Representatives only after its expert panels had examined the matter further. The appeals filed by the three ministers who were voted out of their posts during the session of the Council on 26 April remain pending.

10. Political efforts to mediate the disagreements in the Council of Representatives included those of a six-member group of parliamentary leaders whose affiliations cross party lines. The group, led by a Member of Parliament from the State of Law Coalition, Ali al-Allaq, shuttled between various political blocs in

Baghdad and Irbil. The President, Fuad Masum, also held regular meetings with key leaders and representatives of the Reform Front. The Speaker of Parliament made repeated visits to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to address the concerns of the Members of Parliament from the Kurdistan Alliance regarding their return to Baghdad, and the Prime Minister met the Alliance on 28 May. On 29 May, the majority of the members of Parliament from the Alliance participated in the parliamentary session. The political stalemate and protests dominated the national debate, and there was no significant progress on national reconciliation.

11. Iraq's economic crisis continued to adversely affect its people, notwithstanding the marginal recovery in global oil prices. On 19 May, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced that it had reached an agreement with the Government of Iraq on a request for a 36-month standby arrangement. Subject to the approval of the Executive Board of IMF, it would provide Iraq with access to IMF credit amounting to approximately $5.4 billion. The funds would be made available subject to changes being effected to bring the country's economic and financial policies in line with the lower level of oil prices and ensure debt sustainability. Iraq is also expected to receive at least $3 billion from the World Bank over the course of three years, with the first tranche of $1 billion due to be disbursed in December 2016.

12. In May, the Kurdistan Regional Government officially launched a three-year reform plan, entitled "Reforming the economy for shared prosperity and protecting the vulnerable". The plan, which was drawn up with the assistance of the World Bank Group, is comprised of several pillars, such as fiscal consolidation, structural reforms for sustainable private sector-led growth, social sector reforms and mitigation measures and accountability. The conference to launch the plan, hosted by the Ministry of Planning of the Kurdistan Regional Government, was attended by the President of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Masoud Barzani, and senior Kurdistan Regional Government officials, as well as representatives of the international community, including the United Nations.

13. During a meeting on 28 May with members of Parliament from the Kurdish parties on outstanding issues between Baghdad and Irbil, the Prime Minister requested that the Kurdistan Regional Government and Kurdish political parties send their respective delegations to Baghdad to resume negotiations on outstanding issues. On 7 June, all Kurdish cabinet ministers returned to Baghdad to attend meetings of the Council of Ministers.

14. On 17 May, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Gorran Movement signed a political agreement ending the split between the two organizations. Although the agreement does not stipulate a merger of the two parties, it provides for them contesting elections at the national, regional and governorate levels as a single list. Both parties also affirmed their preference for a parliamentary system of government in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, with the President of the Region elected by the Regional Parliament. On 18 May, the Kurdistan Democratic Party issued a statement noting that the agreement would worsen the political situation in Kurdistan. It also criticized the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan for entering into the agreement without prior notification to the Kurdistan Democratic Party, given an earlier strategic agreement between the two parties. Political dialogue to address the outstanding differences between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan continued.

## B. Security

15. During the reporting period, the Iraqi security forces, the Peshmerga, the popular mobilization forces and local fighters, with support from the international counter-ISIL coalition, continued to make progress in retaking areas from ISIL. Steady momentum in military operations was maintained, most notably in Anbar governorate, which resulted in the retaking of Hit city, Rutbah city and the recovery of territory in western Anbar, near the Walid border crossing with the Syrian Arab Republic and the Turaybil border crossing with Jordan.

16. On 22 May, the Prime Minister announced the launch of a large-scale operation to retake Fallujah from ISIL, involving all major components of Iraq's security apparatus, including the popular mobilization forces. At the time of writing, the operation had made progress despite heavy resistance from ISIL. In the boundary area between Irbil and Ninawa governorates, the Peshmerga expanded control in Makhmur district and heavy fighting is taking place south of Mosul.

17. The security situation has remained volatile across Iraq. While ISIL sustained consistent losses in resources and territory, the group increasingly resorted to asymmetric tactics, such as suicide attacks and raids on pro-Government forces' positions, as well as attacks against soft civilian targets, infrastructure and cultural heritage sites. On 3 June, ISIL damaged the Nabu Temple in Nimrud (Iraq) which was founded more than 3,300 years ago.

18. In Baghdad, which was the area most affected by terrorist incidents, there were indications of deployment by ISIL of more substantial resources to execute operations, with the use of high-yield explosive devices and complex and suicide attacks. On 11, 17 and 30 May, a series of suicide attacks were carried out in Baghdad, resulting in a large number of civilian casualties. The attacks on 11 May in Sadr city, Karak and Kazimiyah areas reportedly killed over 92 civilians and wounded over 150; the attacks on 17 May in the Sha'b, Habibiyah and Jamilah areas of Baghdad reportedly killed 53 civilians and wounded 130, and the attacks on 30 May were carried out in Tarmiyah, Sha'b and Sadr city and left 24 civilians dead and 44 wounded. On 15 May, ISIL carried out a complex suicide attack against a cooking gas factory in northern Baghdad, reportedly causing 35 casualties among Iraqi security force personnel protecting the facility and substantial damage to storage tanks. On 7 June, a car bomb attack claimed by ISIL in the Muwazzafin district of Karbala governorate reportedly killed eight civilians and wounded 18.

## C. Regional and international developments

19. Iraq continued to engage its regional neighbours as well as the broader international community on security, political and economic issues. In addition, developments related to the popular demonstrations, the terrorist attacks that targeted Sadr city and other areas on 11 May and the start of the military operation to retake Fallujah prompted public expressions of support and solidarity for the Government and the people of Iraq. Public statements by Qatar, the United States of America, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the European Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, among others, highlighted concern about recent developments and called for unity, peaceful dialogue and other solutions to the various challenges faced by Iraq. In most cases,

the statements reflected pledges of various forms of support to the Government, including to the Iraqi security forces.

20. Senior-level visits to Iraq sought to underscore the regional neighbours' ongoing support to the Government of Iraq. The Minister for Security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmoud Alavi, visited Iraq in May. He met senior government, political, security and religious representatives in Baghdad, Najaf and Irbil, and reportedly discussed the fight against ISIL. In relation to the Fallujah operation and other operations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran made statements expressing Tehran's readiness to provide additional support. In response to media attention to the presence of regional military advisers involved in the Fallujah operation, on 4 June the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq stated that only the Government of Iraq would decide on the nationality of military advisers supporting its campaign against ISIL.

21. In June, the Government of Iraq dispatched three senior delegations to enhance its outreach to neighbouring States, with the aim of providing briefings on the Fallujah operation. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ibrahim al-Ja'afari, and the head of the Sunni Endowment, Abdullatif al-Humayim, visited Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. The second delegation, headed by the Minister for Planning, Salman al-Jumaili, and National Security Adviser, Falah Fayyad, visited Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain, while a third delegation, headed by the Minister for Defence, Khaled al-Obeidi, went to the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait.

22. Reflecting the progress made by the Iraqi security forces in retaking Anbar territory from ISIL, Iraqi federal and governorate officials issued statements welcoming the prospect of reopening the Iraqi-Jordanian border crossing at Turaybil, as well as the completion of the Amman-Baghdad highway, which would help facilitate the transfer of people and goods in both directions.

23. On the economic front, on 15 May the heads of the National Iranian Gas Company and the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited Iraq to finalize the financial details of an agreement on gas exports. The Islamic Republic of Iran undertook to re-initiate its exports of natural gas to the Kurdistan region of Iraq, pending the operationalization of the agreement. On 19 May, Iraq's Ministry of Electricity announced that the Government had agreed to issue a sovereign guarantee to cover Iraq's dues to the Ministry of Electricity of the Islamic Republic of Iran, amounting to approximately $700 million. The goal was to facilitate the renewal of the contract to supply up to 1,300 MW of electricity, interrupted several months earlier, which was approved by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

24. On 27 May, the Group of Seven countries held a summit in Ise-Shima, Japan, during which it committed continued support for the unity of Iraq and the Government of Iraq's efforts to accelerate political and economic reforms and enhance national reconciliation. It also supported Iraq's discussions with IMF and underscored the need for all parts of Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, to have access to that support. The Group of Seven also pledged over $3.6 billion in bilateral assistance and other financial support to complement support from the international financial institutions.

25. Turkish air strikes against Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) targets in the Kurdistan region of Iraq continued. The strikes targeted districts in Dahuk, Irbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates. At the time of reporting, Iraq and Turkey had not found

a mutually acceptable solution to the Turkish military presence in Bashiqa camp in northern Iraq, in spite of some efforts.

## III. Update on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations country team

### A. Political activities

26. My Special Representative and the Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs continued to meet with Government officials, political, security, religious and community leaders, Members of Parliament, members of the coordination committee of the protesters and civil society representatives in an effort to help de-escalate and overcome the ongoing political stalemate. My Special Representative called on the Prime Minister and other leaders to hold inclusive consultations with all parties, including in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, in search of political solutions based on the Constitution, laws and principles of democracy. He further encouraged Iraqi leaders to resume the work of a unified Council of Representatives and to confirm without delay a reformed Government that is able and willing to promote reforms, answering to the people who have been requesting them through peaceful protests since August 2015.

27. Additionally, my Special Representative, while supporting peaceful demonstrations held in accordance with the law, condemned the use of violence during the recent demonstrations. He urged for calm, restraint and respect for Iraq's constitutional institutions and law and further urged the protest organizers and the security forces to safeguard the peaceful nature of the demonstrations. My Special Representative also held several meetings with the political leaders of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in Irbil and Sulaymaniyah, encouraging them to re-engage with the federal Government to overcome the political impasse and restart the work of the Parliament and Government. In addition, my Special Representative called for progress on outstanding issues between Baghdad and Irbil and for a solution to the ongoing political stalemate in the Kurdistan region.

28. My Special Representative had several meetings with the Marja'iya in Najaf. He met with Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani on 30 May. The Marja'iya expressed its discontent over the political stalemate and ongoing lack of progress on reforms and improvement in the lives of Iraqis. The Marja'iya stated that he had urged the political forces to unite and find a solution to the political, economic and social crises, while continuing to fight ISIL. On 4 and 5 June, my Special Representative visited Amman and met with Government officials, during which he encouraged them to continue to support Iraq in its fight against ISIL and the national reconciliation efforts and to work on opening the border crossing at Turaybil.

29. In response to the security situation and terrorist attacks on civilians, particularly in May, my Special Representative engaged Government representatives and security and religious leaders, urging them, together with all segments of Iraqi society, to reject the terrorist acts of ISIL and its objective to sow discord, disunity and sectarian strife. Further, my Special Representative sought to impress on the Government the need to provide and guarantee law and order and security to all citizens and to take immediate and more effective measures to prevent acts of terror and protect the Iraqi people.

30. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq also publicly expressed concern about the decision by the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission to order the closure of the offices of Al Jazeera satellite news network in Baghdad and in doing so emphasized that, at times of crisis, a free media becomes even more essential to safeguarding the public interest and protecting democracy.

## B. Electoral assistance

31. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq continued to support the Independent High Electoral Commission on preparations for the 2017 Provincial Council elections, while taking note of calls from some political forces for thorough electoral reform, and even for early elections, with more direct United Nations involvement. UNAMI maintained regular consultations with the Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission regarding orderly electoral preparations, including on United Nations support and political developments in Iraq relevant to the work of the Commission. UNAMI helped the Commission follow up with potential donors on the project proposals previously submitted for international funding, with several donors expressing interest in supporting projects relating to gender issues, information technology and work on ensuring the electoral participation of voters displaced by conflict.

32. UNAMI continued to provide technical advice as the Commission commenced its analysis of voters' biometric data and to define mechanisms for cleaning the voter registry, including the addition of new voters to, and the removal of deceased persons from, the list of voters. UNAMI projects that the biometric data of up to 5.6 million voters will be collected by the close of the registration process, on 30 June. The Commission also expanded its ongoing biometric registration of internally displaced voters, with 113 mobile teams deployed in 16 governorates, not including Anbar and Ninawa. UNAMI is also supporting the Commission on ways to improve its election results management systems and has encouraged the Commission to weigh viable options in adopting new procedures and technologies for speeding up processes to count and transmit election results.

33. Following renewed requests from the Kurdistan Regional Government for United Nations electoral support, UNAMI encouraged the Independent High Electoral Commission and the Kurdistan Region's Independent High Electoral Commission to secure parliamentary endorsement of their signed joint memorandum of cooperation. Both the Legal Committee in the Council of Representatives and the Kurdistan Regional Parliament have now approved the joint memorandum that provides the necessary legal standing to strengthen cooperation and support, particularly in organizing regional elections and on potential areas of international electoral technical assistance.

## C. Human rights developments and activities

34. Armed conflicts, acts of violence and terrorism continued to take a grave toll on the population of Iraq. From 6 May to 14 June 2016, UNAMI recorded a minimum of 1,953 civilian casualties (607 killed and 1,346 wounded), bringing the total number of civilian casualties in Iraq since the beginning of the armed conflict in January 2014 to at least 66,181 (22,339 killed and 43,842 wounded).

35. The reporting period was characterized by several attacks, most of them claimed by ISIL. UNAMI is not in a position to independently verify the accuracy of those claims. For example, on 9 May, a suicide car bomb attack in Ba'qubah city, Diyala governorate, reportedly killed 14 civilians and wounded 38. On 11 May, a car bomb attack in Baghdad reportedly killed 28 persons and wounded 74. On 21 May, an attack by a suicide bomber driving a motorcycle in Dujayl district, Salah al-Din governorate, reportedly killed 12 persons and wounded 33.

36. UNAMI received numerous reports alleging serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated against civilians, in particular by ISIL. Members of diverse ethnic and religious communities, women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly remain especially vulnerable.

37. UNAMI continued to receive reports of abductions, killings and persecution by ISIL of those opposed to its ideology or rule. For example, on 12 May, in Mosul, a group of ISIL supporters shot and killed five men accused of cooperating with the Iraqi security forces. On 14 May, also in Mosul, ISIL publicly stoned to death 18 men and one woman for alleged adultery, following a decision by a self-appointed court of ISIL. Civilians continued to die or were killed by ISIL for trying to flee areas controlled by the group. For example, on 16 May, five civilians from one family, including three children, reportedly died from dehydration in the Hamrin Mountains while attempting to escape ISIL-controlled Hawijah, Kirkuk governorate, towards Salah al-Din governorate.

38. Further reports have been received that ISIL may have used weaponized chemical agents in its attacks. On 8 May, ISIL once again launched rockets toward Bashir village, south of Kirkuk city, resulting in breathing difficulty and nausea, as well as skin irritation, being suffered by those in the area. On 14 May, ISIL reportedly carried out an attack against Peshmerga forces in Makhmur district, Irbil Governorate, after which 14 Peshmerga fighters indicated they had breathing difficulty, sore eyes and headaches. UNAMI could not verify whether weaponized chemical agents were used.

39. On 9 June, the Governor of Anbar and the Provincial Council of Anbar formed a committee to investigate alleged human rights violations against civilians fleeing the hostilities in Fallujah. The committee examined the events that took place from 2 to 4 June near the Albu Akkash cemetery (Saqlawiyah city, northwest of Fallujah city) and Mazra'ah (east of Fallujah city). On 12 June, the committee reported that it had found that 49 people were killed and 634 men were missing after handing themselves over to the custody of popular mobilization forces. The committee further found that those detained suffered widespread torture. The committee called on the President of Iraq, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament to investigate further, and for the Prime Minister and the head of the Popular Mobilization Commission to terminate the work of the popular mobilization forces in areas where violations have taken place.

40. UNAMI received separate reports stating that men leaving Fallujah were detained for security screening and were subjected to serious ill-treatment. UNAMI received reports that on 5 or 6 June, up to 613 men were released from detention after undergoing security screening over an unspecified period of time in Saqlawiyah. The men claimed to have been seriously ill-treated. UNAMI received reports that between four and nine men were killed while in detention. Up to 4,000 men who fled Fallujah have reportedly been detained for security screening.

41. Reports continued to be received by UNAMI of human rights violations perpetrated by armed groups reportedly associated with the popular mobilization forces. On 10 May, an affiliated armed group allegedly stopped three trucks carrying commercial goods in an area south of Ba'qubah, Diyala governorate. The drivers were reportedly killed and the vehicles with cargo left behind. On 22 May, armed men reportedly shot and killed a civilian in Miqdadiyah district, Diyala governorate.

42. Air strikes and shelling continued to cause civilian casualties. However, UNAMI was unable to verify their numbers and their authors. For example, on 13, 16 and 18 May, shelling reportedly caused civilian casualties in Khalidiyah, Anbar governorate. Several reports were also received of shelling reportedly killing and wounding civilians in Fallujah, Anbar governorate during the reporting period. On 19 May, an air strike reportedly hit a residential area in Fallujah, killing eight civilians (including four women and three children) and wounding nine others.

43. The Government of Iraq continued to impose the death penalty. On 23 May, the Ministry of Justice announced on its website that 22 individuals had been executed in the previous month. They had reportedly been convicted of terrorism-related crimes and other crimes. The United Nations has repeatedly called on the Government of Iraq to impose a moratorium on all death sentences and executions, particularly given the weaknesses of the Iraqi criminal justice system and the risk of non-compliance with international standards of due process and fair trial.

44. The Task Force on Children and Armed Conflict, co-chaired by UNAMI and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), received reports of 47 incidents of violations against children in the reporting period, affecting 220 children. The majority of those incidents were reported to have taken place in Baghdad, as well as in Anbar and Ninawa governorates, in the course of military operations. Only 38 of those incidents, affecting 75 children, could be verified at the time of writing, as a result of ongoing military operations.

45. Killing and maiming continued to be one of the most reported violations, with 55 children confirmed killed and 16 maimed. The number of killed and injured children is believed to be much higher as a result of the bomb attacks in Baghdad. The Task Force has also received reports of the recruitment of children by ISIL, notably in Anbar governorate, including cases of child suicide bombers, which could not be verified due to lack of access and sensitivity of cases. The Task Force received information about four incidents of attacks on schools and three attacks on hospitals during the reporting period. In addition, access to basic services, such as education and health care, continued to be severely hampered by military operations in conflict-affected areas, notably in Anbar.

46. On 24 May, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) launched an online awareness-building and mobilization campaign called "We are here". Its aim is to inspire women activists from Iraq and the region to share their stories with the world and document their roles in building their countries. The social media campaign seeks inspirational stories in the form of tweets, captions, photos and videos of women from across the region as they participate in building and furthering the political and social fabric of their nations.

## D. Camp Hurriya

47. The United Nations continued to monitor the humanitarian situation of the residents of Camp Hurriya throughout the reporting period. The total departures as at 14 June 2016 stood at 1,493 and the total number of registered residents remaining in the temporary transit location stood at 1,578. Following an international agreement, funds have been mobilized to relocate the remaining residents. The Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other stakeholders are working closely together to relocate all individuals outside Iraq within 2016. In the time period of the present report, approximately 40 residents of the camp departed per week. An increase in weekly departures is anticipated at the end of June.

## E. Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development

48. The humanitarian operation remains one of the largest and most complex in the world. Humanitarian partners estimate that over 10 million Iraqis currently require some form of humanitarian assistance, including over 3.3 million internally displaced persons, 726,000 returnees, 250,000 Syrian refugees and the 3 million people believed to be living under ISIL control. In the months ahead, as the military campaign intensifies, humanitarian needs are projected to increase significantly. More than 470,000 people living in areas along the Anbar corridor and 830,000 along the Mosul corridor are likely to require assistance; more than 1 million people are expected to be affected by military operations in Mosul city.

49. The United Nations is deeply worried about the safety of the thousands of women, men, girls and boys who are still trapped in Fallujah. Since the beginning of the military operations to retake the city, more than 43,000 civilians have managed to flee the city. Most people have fled to outlying areas. The United Nations does not know how many civilians are still in the city, but as many as 40,000 to 50,000 could be at extreme risk from artillery and cross-fire and could be suffering from widespread food shortages, lack of medicine and limited supplies of safe drinking water. Humanitarian partners have had no access to Fallujah since early 2014, when the city fell to ISIL. Support for families displaced from the city is being provided at several locations, where life-saving supplies have been pre-positioned and where the Government has established camps. Such assistance included ready-to-eat food, safe drinking water and hygiene kits in Fallujah district, benefiting about 5,500 people. In Amiriyat al-Fallujah, where most displaced people from Fallujah arrived, United Nations partners provided 3,000 people with immediate response rations, each of which feeds a family of 5 for three days.

50. There is grave concern about the close to 30,000 people who are estimated to be living between the current military front line and the eastern bank of the Tigris River and the hundreds of thousands of civilians who remain trapped in areas effectively under siege, who lack access to regular humanitarian assistance. At least 620 people, including 250 children, have been stranded between military front lines east of Mount Sinjar in Ninawa governorate since November 2015.

51. During the reporting period, humanitarian partners have continued to provide life-saving assistance, reaching more than 2 million highly vulnerable people each month. New humanitarian operations have been launched in several hard-to-reach

areas, including Ramadi, Hit and Mahkmur district. The rapid response mechanism, managed by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP), in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and a consortium of non-governmental organization partners, has distributed thousands of ready-to-eat food rations, bottled water and hygiene kits. The World Health Organization, UNICEF and the Iraqi Ministry of Health have reached more than 5.5 million children under the age of five through nationwide polio campaigns.

52. As the mine action subcluster lead, the United Nations Mine Action Service coordinated activities to raise awareness about improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance, in areas with large concentrations of displaced families and returnees originating from Anbar. In June, mine action partners launched risk awareness campaigns with local media and training of trainer initiatives with schoolteachers and community focal points within camps for internally displaced persons.

53. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other education partners have scaled-up temporary learning spaces to support children outside the formal education system. Hundreds of thousands of displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees have received water and sanitation services. New camps were built by UNHCR and prefabricated shelters built by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) are supporting internally displaced persons in Baghdad, Dahuk and Karbala governorates.

54. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations distributed vegetable seeds and peat moss to thousands of crisis-affected farmers in Anbar and Salah al-Din governorates, to help communities minimize negative coping mechanisms. During the reporting period, partners worked alongside WFP to assist 270,000 internally displaced persons with food vouchers and targeted over 800,000 internally displaced persons with in-kind assistance. In addition, close to 50,000 food-insecure Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan region of Iraq received cash and vouchers.

55. In support of the contingency plan for the Anbar and Mosul corridors and for Mosul city, the humanitarian pooled fund for Iraq has given priority to partners operating in hard-to-reach and underserved areas. Operational preparedness planning for a potential failure of Mosul Dam has also accelerated, in coordination between UNAMI and the Government of Iraq. A four-member United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team was deployed to Iraq and has drafted a range of protocols on issues related to tax exemptions for the import of humanitarian goods, visas for humanitarian workers, the rapid registration of non-governmental organizations and the facilitation of access for foreign medical teams.

56. According to data collected by the International Organization for Migration, more than 726,000 displaced people have returned to their areas of origin. More than 40 per cent returned to Salah al-Din governorate, in part because of the stability corridor from Dawr to Tikrit created with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization. A total of 18 per cent of returnees have returned to Ninawa, 18 per cent to Diyala and 16 per cent to Anbar, including an estimated 100,000 returnees to Ramadi.

57. With more areas retaken from ISIL, the demand for stabilization assistance increased significantly. The Steering Committee for the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization, currently supported by 20 donors, approved support for

17 Iraqi cities. The Funding Facility concluded activities in Tikrit, Dawr, Mukayshifah and Rabiah and it is currently operational in Sa'diyah, Ramadi, Sinuni and Sinjar. Once security clearances are granted, it will launch activities in Baji, Hit, Haditha, Rutbah and Garma and, once they have been retaken, will launch similar activities in Fallujah, Sharqat, Hadar and Qayyarah.

58. In anticipation of operations to retake Mosul, the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization has been prepositioning equipment to help ensure the timely provision of stabilization assistance once conditions permit. A preliminary list of high priority projects has been identified for a new expanded stabilization channel, which will generate a large number of jobs and consolidate corridors between stabilized cities. The international counter-ISIL coalition held the quarterly meeting of its stabilization working group in Berlin on 27 May, co-chaired by the United Arab Emirates and Germany. The objective of the meeting was to discuss strategic developments and the direction of stabilization efforts in newly-liberated areas. Representing the United Nations in Iraq, my Deputy Special Representative and Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator provided an update on the status of the Funding Facility and the expanded facility, and stressed the critical need to increase funding for humanitarian operations, stabilization and clearance of unexploded ordnance. Working Group members reflected on progress in newly-liberated areas but expressed concern that military gains might be at risk if stabilization does not keep pace.

59. Stabilization efforts in Ramadi have been affected by severe unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices contamination. Clearance operations were accelerated in the city with support from the Mine Action Service. The latter's assistance also included an impact assessment to identify improvised explosive devices threats and training on explosive hazard threat mitigation. During the reporting period, the security conditions in Sinjar district and Sa'diya town improved, allowing the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization to commence stabilization activities.

60. The United Nations country team continued to support the Government's reform agenda. UNDP deployed technical experts to Baghdad in April and May to assist the Government with its planned reform of customs and strengthening of anti-corruption institutions. UNESCO assisted the Government with its reform of the technical and vocational education and training sector. At the time of writing, over 600,000 young people had enrolled in technical and vocational education and training institutions.

61. Building on the innovative Vision 2020 Joint Programme Facility Fund, a new funding facility for reform was developed to support the Kurdistan Regional Government reform agenda. The funding facility is for the mobilization of international expertise to help accelerate the implementation of the Kurdistan Regional Government-World Bank reform plan, which was launched in May (see para. 12). UN-Habitat has assisted the Kurdistan Regional Government in developing legislation to regularize informal settlements. It also assisted the Regional Government in developing new building codes and advised the Regional Government on simplifying building permit procedures, so as to help ensure new constructions meet international standards on climate change mitigation and environmental protection.

## F. Security and operational issues

62. United Nations personnel in Iraq continued to work in a high-risk security environment and implement programmes and activities based on programme criticality. The demands on the United Nations for stabilization and humanitarian assistance continued to increase as areas were retaken from ISIL control. ISIL has also increasingly employed asymmetrical warfare by attacking civilian targets across Iraq, including Baghdad. The United Nations personnel's vulnerability and risk exposure while implementing its programmes remained high.

63. Some of the demonstrations described earlier in the present report took place in close proximity to UNAMI compounds in Baghdad. The Green Zone was breached by a large number of protesters, for the second time, on 20 May, with violent confrontations between the protesters and Iraqi security forces. The United Nations security management system continued to cooperate with relevant Iraqi Government security agencies as part of the ongoing efforts to mitigate the risk implied by such events for staff safety and security.

64. Over a decade after the Mission deployed, the dialogue between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations to conclude a status-of-mission agreement is still ongoing. In February 2016, the Government sent new proposals to the United Nations to resolve outstanding issues, to which the Organization has responded. The United Nations looks forward to resolving the issue.

65. Safe and secure accommodation in Baghdad for international United Nations staff continues to be limited. In addition to the existing 185 accommodation units in the D-2 compound, 99 more units are planned for construction in the upcoming year. Ten units were completed by mid-June 2016, 10 are projected to be completed by September 2016 and the remaining 79 by the end of June 2017. Another 37 accommodation units are being built in the old Tamimi compound and will be completed by the end of October, to address the immediate needs of the country team. Additional accommodation is required as stabilization assistance activities expand. Due to the deterioration in the security situation, a helicopter was deployed to Baghdad on 12 May to provide capacity to evacuate staff from the Green Zone to Baghdad International Airport for onward evacuation, if necessary.

# VI. Observations

66. I call on all Iraqi political forces to come together and end the ongoing political deadlock, which negatively affects the work of the Government and the Parliament, at a time when multiplying challenges threaten the nation and its people, who so valiantly fight ISIL. It is essential to resume the work of the unified Council of Representatives soon after Ramadan, based on inclusive consultations, including between Baghdad and Irbil. A reformed Government that is able and willing to proceed with genuine political, economic and social reforms, as called for by the Iraqi people, should be established soon. In order to succeed, inclusive representation on the basis of equal rights and justice for all Iraq's diverse components, including women, youth and minority communities, is essential.

67. The continued efforts of the Prime Minister to pursue much-needed reforms in Iraq, in full consultation and cooperation with all political forces, civil society and protesters, are commendable. All elements of Iraq's political and civil society

spectrum should feel that their contribution is heard and factored into such initiatives. It is important that the Government and all political actors be open to hearing the legitimate demands of the Iraqi people for meaningful and genuine reforms, protect their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and ensure their safety in the exercise of those rights. At the same time, the demonstrators have the responsibility of abiding by the law and maintaining the peaceful character of the protests as a means of legitimate democratic expression. Any destructive or violent behaviour merely undermines the interests of the people and diverts attention and resources away from the fight against ISIL.

68. I reiterate my call upon political leaders in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to reconcile their differences through dialogue and agree to resolve the political stalemate and normalize the function of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament expeditiously, as the Regional Parliament has not convened sessions since October 2015. The regional legislative institution is an embodiment of multiparty democracy in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. There is a pressing need for the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to constructively reengage in order to reach an understanding on oil exports and revenue-sharing, on Peshmerga salaries and on other outstanding issues, and to effectively work together to confront the shared challenges of today and tomorrow, once all areas have been retaken from ISIL.

69. National and local leaders should foster relations within and across their communities to find ways to ensure Iraq's lasting stability. The foundations of such stability require reconciliation at the political, communal and tribal levels. In the wake of successes in the joint fight against ISIL, it is time to take serious steps towards national reconciliation and historic compromise. The United Nations stands ready to assist.

70. I condemn in the strongest possible terms the heinous terrorist attacks on civilians and on public places and the destruction of cultural heritage sites committed by ISIL. Such acts of terrorist violence are contrary to all principles of decency and humanity. These barbaric attacks are cowardly attempts to stoke retaliatory acts, and I call on all Iraqis to resist such manipulation and avoid falling into the trap of ISIL terrorists. The continued killings, kidnappings, rape and torture of Iraqis, notably of minorities, by ISIL cannot be allowed to continue. These acts may constitute crimes against humanity, war crimes and even genocide.

71. Guaranteeing law and order and security to all citizens must be a top priority of State institutions and must remain their prerogative. This is notably a concern in areas with mixed ethnic and religious communities and other areas retaken from ISIL, as is the security and well-being of the population in those areas. That population includes the many internally displaced persons, who are eager to return to their places of origin voluntarily, in safety and dignity, but who have not been able or allowed to do so. The relevant authorities must do their utmost to ensure and guarantee conditions for such returns and to bring the perpetrators of acts that stand in the way of such returns, including killing, hostage-taking, extortion and other criminal acts. to justice. I congratulate the Iraqi security forces, the Peshmerga, the popular mobilization forces and local volunteers on their continuous military momentum and victories against ISIL, most notably in Anbar and Ninawa governorates. That momentum demonstrates that terrorism can be defeated through coordination and collaboration in the pursuit of shared goals.

72. The military operation, along with the participation of local volunteers and tribes to retake Fallujah, could unite the people in the hope that the flames of sectarianism are put out. The realization of that goal would require that the people and Iraqi political forces work together towards achieving a much-needed national reconciliation. Only then will the ground be sown for a truly sustainable, unified Iraq.

73. All parties involved in military operations are strongly urged to make every possible effort to protect the lives of civilians and preserve infrastructure in accordance with the relevant principles of international human rights and humanitarian law. I call on all parties to ensure that civilians, including those in Fallujah, are permitted to leave areas where fighting is taking place, in dignity and safety. In that regard, the recent directives of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Defence and the Popular Mobilization Commission, and in particular the statement of the spiritual leader Ali al-Sistani, which all emphasize the need to ensure the protection of civilians and property from the effects of armed conflict and violence, are commendable.

74. The Government should thoroughly investigate reports of alleged human rights violations against civilians in Fallujah and hold those found to be responsible to account. The people of Fallujah have already suffered immensely under ISIL; they should not be subjected to further suffering and intimidation. The noble cause of ridding Fallujah of ISIL terrorists should not be tarnished by violations of human rights and people's dignity, including on sectarian or criminal grounds. It is therefore important that the Government has command and control of all fighters and weapons. It is also the responsibility of national, regional and international media to ensure that a balanced and true picture of the complex situation in Iraq be presented and to prevent reporting from being instrumentalized to foment sectarian tension.

75. The international community must also ensure the accountability of members of ISIL for the crimes they have perpetrated against the Iraqi people. I continue to have grave fears for the safety of women and children, mostly from the Yazidi community (as reflected in previous reports), who are being held in captivity by ISIL, and all civilians who remain subject to ISIL control. Ongoing allegations of the use of weaponized chemicals by ISIL in attacks on civilians and security force personnel also remain a source of great concern.

76. The humanitarian aid effort continues to be hampered by limited funding. The United Nations highly prioritized appeal for 2016 has received only 30 per cent of the $861 million needed to assist 7.3 million people. Already more than 30 health programmes have had to be closed, owing to lack of funding. Humanitarian partners estimate that $300 million is needed by July in order to continue first-line emergency response. An additional $65 million is needed for the Fallujah operation and at least $250 million is required to prepare for the humanitarian operation in Mosul.

77. Additional focus and funding is required for civilian activities that are critical to secure the gains of the military campaign against ISIL. As the campaign progresses, it creates additional humanitarian need. Areas retaken from ISIL will frequently require a stabilization response following an operation and in that regard, the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization has been authorized for use in 17 different areas across four governorates. Furthermore, both humanitarian and stabilization activities increasingly require initiatives to address remnant improvised explosive devices and other explosive remnants of war where they are present, which is increasingly the case. The United Nations in Iraq is facing funding constraints on all of these fronts.

If resources are not marshalled for all the above-mentioned efforts, the gains of the military campaign could be imperilled by a lack of capacity to address the needs of civilians, created by and in the aftermath of the campaign. Finally, while acknowledging the importance of these urgent and immediate matters, the United Nations in Iraq continues to work in parallel with partners to focus on longer-term challenges.

78. I wish to extend my appreciation to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, and to the staff of the United Nations in Iraq for their tireless efforts to assist the Government and people of Iraq. I trust that international partners, including Iraq's neighbours in the region, will continue to support my Special Representative in the implementation of his mandate.